

To: Allen, HarryL[Allen.HarryL@epa.gov]
From: Moezzi, Rameen
Sent: Mon 8/10/2015 9:02:25 PM
Subject: Weekly totals for Monday August 3 through Sunday August 9, 2015

Hi Harry,

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Significant Events/Action Reports:

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Gold King Mine, 8/5/15: While an EPA and Colorado State Div of Reclamation Mining and Safety team was working to investigate and address contamination at the abandoned Gold King Mine in San Juan County, CO, an estimated one million gallons of mine wastewater that was held behind unconsolidated debris near a mine portal was unexpectedly released into the upper portions of Cement Creek, a tributary of the Animas River. The release's path flows through three of EPA's regions: Region 8—Colorado, Utah and the Southern Ute Tribe; Region 6--New Mexico; and, Region 9--Navajo Nation. The R6 Mobile Command Post arrived in Farmington, NM on 8/9. The flow from the Gold King mine was measured at 548 gallons per minute on 8/8. The mine water is being treated in a series of settling ponds constructed near the portal; the treatment appears to be effective. A draft sampling plan is being developed jointly by Regions 8, 6 and 9 to address sampling and analysis of sediment and well-water. Sampling will continue throughout the impacted area as well as ahead of the plume to establish baseline water quality. The incident caused a spike in concentrations of total and dissolved metals as the contaminated mine water moved downstream. These concentrations began to trend toward pre-event conditions by 8/6. Data collected on 8/7 and 8/8, once it is evaluated, will inform whether the trend towards pre-event conditions continues. EPA is working with State and local government officials to determine when to reopen drinking water intakes and open the river for recreation. The contaminant plume is depositing sediments and EPA is beginning to assess the impacts of the sediment. The discharge has moved quickly and was observed near Kirtland, NM.

Region 9 has deployed an OSC to the Durango ICP to coordinate Navajo field activity updates and results with Region 8 and ensure command messages get back to Navajo officials. The Region has also deployed a PIO to participate in a Joint Information Center (JIC), presently in Durango, with affected Federal, State, County and Tribal agencies. The Navajo EPA surface water monitoring program (Shiprock Office) collected water and sediment samples from the San Juan River prior to the spill impact. Region 9 has provided 6 START contractors to coordinate and conduct increased sample collection and lab analysis in conjunction with Navajo Nation EPA (NNEPA). This joint EPA/NNEPA river sampling program has commenced focusing on the San Juan between Shiprock/Hogback, NM area and Mexican Hat, UT and will continue for the foreseeable future. A Region 9 OSC will report to Farmington on Monday to assist. NNEPA also requested drinking water sampling support immediately for Navajo operated water intakes. NNEPA and USEPA drinking water experts agreed to inventory and assess water sources including private wells and intakes. Region 9 will be providing assistance to Navajo NTUA (utilities) to deliver water to the areas impacted by the Gold King Mine Spill - starting with the Montezuma Creek area. NTUA is sourcing the water from their Sweetwater wells and filling up the service tanks in the affected areas. The ERRS contractor will be providing assistance in the transportation of these waters. Two Community Involvement Coordinators (CICs) arrived in Farmington on Sunday. The CICs will partner with NNEPA and NN Department of Public Safety to ensure comprehensive outreach to all affected Navajo Chapters. The CICs have begun working with local Navajo Chapter officials and will participate in public meetings at Aneth and Oljato on 8/10.